GATHERING IN THE MUSAAJID ON AUSPICIOUS NIGHTS

(extracted from Ahsanul Fataawa, vol. 1, page 371-373)
By Mufti Abdur Rashid Ludhanvi (Alahi Rahma)

Question: What is the esteemed opinion of the Ulama-e-Kiraam regarding the now customary gathering of people in the Musaajid on the nights of the two Eids, 15th Sha'baan, the last ten nights of Ramadhaan and other auspicious nights, to recite Qur`aan Majeed, make Thikr, etc. ? Some Musaajid even make special arrangements for the delivering of lectures on these nights. What is the Shar`i status of these actions?

Answer: There are three scenarios regarding the performance of Ibaadat in the Musaajid on these nights:

1). **This is when people come to the Musjid informally without any special arrangement, and engage in *tilaawat*, Thikr, etc. This is permissible**, but it is more meritorious and rewarding to perform Nafl Salaat and make *tilaawat* at home. In fact, there is even more reward to perform these acts of Ibaadat at home than in *Musjid-e-Haraam* (Makkah Mukarramah) and in Musjid-e-Nabawi (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). In this regard, it is stated in a hadith, *"It is reported from Zaid bin Thaabit (radhiallahu anhu) that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'The (Nafl) Salaat of a person in his home is more rewarding than his Salaat in my (this) Musjid, except The Maktoobah (Fardh Salaats).'"* [Abu Dawood]

"It is also reported from him that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'The best Salaat, is the Salaat of a man in his home, except The Maktoobah." [Narrated by all besides Ibn Majah-Nailil Autaar]

2).**This is when special arrangements are made for coming to the Musjid. This is a bid`ah.** The reason for this is that when special arrangements are made for coming to the Musjid for Nafl Salaat, it implies a greater reward for its performance, and this is tantamount to altering the Shariah. This is in clear conflict to the blessed words of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who clearly stated that there is greater reward in performing Nafl Salaat at home as opposed to the Musjid.

3). When special arrangements are made on the auspicious nights, where people gather at the Musaajid to either perform extra Nafl Salaat or where a lecture is given, are also acts of Bid`ah. The gravity and evil of this Bid`ah is even greater than the previous one (i.e. No.2 above). The one evil is as outlined above. **The second evil is that Nafl acts of Ibaadat are executed in congregational form, which is prohibited in the Shariah.**

Some people complain that there are too many distractions at the home, where the children make a noise, etc. which prevents proper concentration and meditation. This is a shaitaani deception. The actual import of *khushoo'* (concentration and meditation) is to execute the Ibaadaat in accordance with the Sunnat. When an act of Ibaadat is carried out in accordance to the Sunnat, then *Khushoo'* and *khudhoo'* is also accomplished. If the act is carried out contrary to the Sunnat, then regardless of what concentration there is, it will not be regarded as *khushoo'*. It is worth considering that our Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) executed his Tahajjud and other Nafl Salaats with great diligence and consistency at home and he also regarded this performance at the home to be more meritorious than in a Musjid. Today, we say that we cannot find concentration and *khushoo'* at home! This is clearly a shaitaani deception. It is reported in the Ahaadith that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) used to perform his Nafl Salaat in his room, whilst Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha) had her feet stretched out beside him. When he (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) would make Sajdah then he would

touch her feet whereafter she would move it aside. When Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would stand up for the second Rakaat, then Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha) would once again stretch out her feet. The nights were dark; there was no lamp, the room was so small that if one person was lying down, there was barely space for another to make Sajdah comfortably. The Musjid was so close to this room, that as soon as one stepped out of the room, one would be stepping into the Musjid. And then also, we are referring here to none other than Musjid-e-Nabawi (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), whose great virtue is well-known. Notwithstanding this, the blessed action of our great Benefactor (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), was that he preferred to perform his Nafl Salaat in his room, instead of the Musjid (owing to the greater virtue of performing Nafl at home).

Besides this, people aver that if Salaat is performed in isolation at home, then sleep overcomes one faster than if it were performed in the Musjid in congregation or if one is listening to some lecture in the Musjid. In this congregational form, they say, there is greater chance of engaging in many forms of Ibaadat with more ease than doing it at home, where one will barely be able to achieve even half of what can be executed at the Musjid.

Understand well! The objective of making Ibaadat does not lie in its quantity. The entire reward and objective of Ibaadat is based on its manner of fulfilment. **That little Ibaadat which is carried out in accordance to the Sunnat is countless times more beneficial and rewarding than that which is done contrary to the Sunnat.** The Sunnat method is this that as long as one's disposition (health, alertness, etc.) allows, one should engage in Nafl Ibaadat, and as soon as one becomes tired and sleepy, then rest should be taken. In this regard it is reported in a Hadith, *"Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) reports that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) once entered the Musjid and found a rope tied between two pillars. He asked, 'What is (the meaning of) this?' The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) replied, 'This is for Zainub. When she gets tired (whilst performing Nafl Salaat), she leans on it and it give her support.' He said, 'Untie it! You should perform (Nafl) Salaat whilst alert, and when you get tired or sleepy, then take rest.'" In another Hadith it is stated, "Then you should sit down."* [Muslim]

"It is also reported from Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha) who said, 'Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) once came to me whilst there was some lady with me. He asked, 'Who is this?' I replied, 'This lady does not sleep, she (continuously) makes Salaat.' He said, 'That much (ibaadat) is binding on you, which you are able to carry out. I take an oath in Allaah Ta'ala's Name that Allaah does not tire when you tire, and the best (path in) Deen for you is that upon which you are constant.' It is reported in another Hadith from Aishah (radhiallahu anha), 'Take from acts of Ibaadat that which you are able to carry out, I take an oath in the Name of Allaah Ta`ala, Allaah does not get tired when you get tired.'" [Sheikhain]

And Allaah Ta`ala knows best.

Addition by Mufti Elias:

Moreover these days the matter worsens when there is extensive "Taadihi" (Calling) which is not proven in the Shariat. This "Calling" which establishes its 'Bidat' status is done via posters, leaflets, Radio and T.V. announcements.
Further congregational night vigils are not also proven in the Shariat. In fact according to the Hanafi Scholars congregational Nafl Salaat is Makrooh Taharmi.
Further – these night gatherings in the Masjids eventually lead to waste of time in feeding procedures and totally unnecessary groupings of gossiping, backbiting, and slandering, also in many instances promoting personality projection and over lauding of 'heroes'.
One should rather properly execute those actions which conform to the Shariat; although it be better than indulging in superficial quantity which is contrary to Shariat and tantamount to Bidat.

May Allaah Ta'ala protect us in these times when bidat is promoted under the guise of gaining proximity to Allaah Ta'ala.

P.S. Read, circulate and print.

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